

C12.14 Geography of the Global Information Society
Activities 2012-16

The Commission on Geography of Global Information Society has had a productive period between 2012 and 2016. This report summarizes the Commission's steering committee and general membership, past and future events, and collaborations.

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1. Membership

Currently, there are more than 200 members on the Commission mailing list. The locations include United States (31), France (13), United Kingdom (13), Germany (11), Australia (7), Japan (7), China (5), Korea (5), Sweden (6), Belgium (4), Finland (4), Italy (4), Canada (3), Greece (4), Israel (3), South Africa (2), Spain (2), Austria (1), Czech Republic (1), Estonia (1), Slovenia (1), Singapore (1), Netherlands (1), New Zealand (1), Poland (1) and unknown (57).

2. Meetings 2012-16

With the move to annual IGU meetings the Commission developed and promoted sessions as part of the official IGU meeting and suspended its own separate meetings. Members reported on the cost burden of multiple meetings in any one year, but with fewer IGU meetings in the future we look forward to holding our own events in non-IGU meeting years. In addition, the Commission has dedicated sessions as part of the AAG annual meetings in the United States and has organized occasional sessions with the Regional Studies Association.

The themes addressed in Commission meetings fall into several categories; First, the spatial character of information and communication technology and use broadly defined, with emphasis on: a) ICT and quality of life; b) ICT and health; c) the contribution of ICT to new industries and regional economic development; and d) ICT and media. Second, Commission members and sessions have increasingly addressed the role of knowledge and innovation as a geographic, social and economic phenomenon. Third, collaborations with other Commissions on themes of

digital culture, or regional information economies such as the Mediterranean Basin. Finally, the Commission has collaborated with other Commissions to explore the role and impact of mega events on people and places. Details of specific meetings during 2012-16 include:

- 2012 February – Commission organized three sessions as part of the AAG annual meeting in New York
- 2012 August – Commission organized 6 sessions as part of the IGC in Cologne
- 2013 April – Commission organized one session at AAG Los Angeles in collaboration with the Communications interest group of the AAG.
- 2013 August – Commission organized 10 sessions for the IGC in Kyoto and two field trips related to information society. Sessions focused on information society as it relates to: tradition and culture; quality of life and health care; knowledge and creativity; media; space and place; business applications of ICT; urban perspectives; and mega event planning. The IGC Kyoto sessions for the Commission underscored the importance of media and entertainment industries as part of the economic geography of ICT, as well as interest in health and quality of life issues.
- 2013 October – Commission sponsored one session at the World Social Science Forum. Five papers were presented on the significance of geography in a digital world.
- 2014 April – AAG Tampa. Two sessions on Mega Event Planning proposed in collaboration with the University of Zurich and the Universidade Federal Fluminense.
- 2014 June – Commission organized two sessions as part of the Regional Studies Association meeting in Izmir.
- 2014-August – Commission sessions with IGU Congress in Krakow, Poland. The Commission proposed three sessions on information society including knowledge and innovation, one session on Mediterranean information society with the Commission on the Mediterranean Basin, and one session on digital culture with the Commission on Cultural approach in Geography. In addition, three sessions on mega event planning were held in collaboration with Commissions on Cultural Approach in Geography, Tourism, Leisure, and Global Change, Urban Geography, and the Mediterranean Basin
- 2015 April – Commission support for two sessions as part of the AAG annual meeting in Chicago
- 2015 August – Commission organized/co-organized 5 sessions for the IGU in Moscow
- 2016 March – Commission organized one session for the AAG annual meeting in San Francisco
- 2016 August – Commission organized 5 sessions, and developed two joint sessions for IGC in Beijing

3. Networking and Communications

Information is disseminated regularly to Commission members via e-mail, including updates on Commission activities, meetings and publications of interests, and requests for information for scholars studying information society. The Commission also uses its websites to inform members of activities. The Commission website is www.igu-informationssociety.org, and the meeting website for special events is www.digitalcommunities.info

Collaboration occurs with scholarly groups and with two journals. Details include:

- IGU collaboration has been with a number of Commissions including the Commissions on Cultural Approach in Geography, Tourism, Leisure, and Global Change, Urban Geography, and the Mediterranean Basin. This collaboration led to sessions at the Krakow 2014, Moscow 2015 and Beijing 2016 IGU meetings

4. Publications

The Commission works closely with two journals that offer peer reviewed articles central to the fields of communications and information technology:

- *NETCOM* is the official Journal of the IGU Commission on the Geography of Global Information Society, and is published under the auspices of the Study Group MTE (CNRS) and Université of Montpellier III, the International Geographical Union, and the French National Committee on Geography. NETCOM takes an interdisciplinary perspective on networks, communications, and space.
- *Journal of Urban Technology*, has commission members on its editorial board and publishes articles, and when possible, special issues drawn from Commission, AAG and IGU conference sessions.

5. Archival Contributions

No archival contributions have been made.

6. Continuation

For the past 25 years the Commission has continued to evolve around the theme of the spatial character of information and communication technologies. Over its life to date the commission has added new areas of expertise and interest, which will continue as we consider the next stage of the Commission's mission. In addition to the ongoing analysis of ICT and information as

spatial phenomena, we have observed strong interest among members around the geography of knowledge and innovation, and it is this theme that we seek to add to our portfolio in the coming 2016-20 period.

A. The revised name of the Commission will be: Commission on the Geography of Information, Innovation and Technology

B. Mission: Space influences so many elements of contemporary society from the concentration of knowledge hubs, to the forms of collaboration and innovation, to the adoption, governance and use of information technologies. As people and places are increasingly connected through information technologies and economies are driven by information and innovation, it is important for scholars to recognize and understand these phenomena. The ability to create, manage and use information and knowledge are defining characteristics of many economies, yet our understanding of how these forces affect people and places is lacking. The Commission on the Geography of Information, Innovation and Technology will address the spatial character of the stocks and flows of knowledge, the conditions surrounding innovation, and the role of ICT globally as a social force.

C. A list of the individuals who will comprise the steering committee from 2016-2020. Provide complete contact information for all proposed steering committee members. **Please note that the Statutes indicate that the maximum period of time that any steering committee member may serve is 12 years (that would include a maximum four years as Chair).**

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D. The work plan for the Commission for the 2016-2020 period includes:

- 2016, August – Participation in the IGC Beijing
- 2017, April: Participation in the Association of American Geographers annual meeting in Boston, USA
- 2017, summer: Commission conference on innovation geography (location tbd)
- 2018, August – Participation in the IGU regional conference in Quebec City, Canada
- 2020 – Participation in the IGC Istanbul